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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 5275  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 3009  
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 000712

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, INL/AAE BUHLER  
DOJ/ICITAP FOR MOGLE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [SOCI](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: COUNTERNARCOTICS SERVICE  
DEVELOPING TRAINING ACADEMY, FORENSICS LAB

1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Visiting DOJ/ICITAP Forensic Advisor and DEA Chemist recently met with section chiefs of the Turkmenistan State Counter Narcotics Service (SCNS) to discuss possible cooperation between the USG/ICITAP and SCNS on the development of a forensics lab. A SCNS official noted ongoing close collaboration between his agency and the U.S. Government. In addition to a forensics lab, the SCNS is also setting up a training academy. Since its creation last year, the agency has primary responsibility for counternarcotics efforts, although it works with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which previously took the lead on counternarcotics issues. END SUMMARY.

3. (SBU) On June 4, DOJ/ICITAP Forensic Advisor Robert Bianchi and Drug Enforcement Administration Chemist Bryan Geer met with representatives of the SCNS. The Acting Head of the International Legal Department, Aman Muhammedkuliev, and the Acting Chief of the Investigation and Prevention of Illicit Drug Trafficking Department, Colonel Nurmammed Yusupov (previously head of the Dashoguz Directorate of the Ministry of National Security) were present, as well as two junior SCNS officers. As is customary, a representative of the MFA Americas Desk also attended.

4. (SBU) Muhammedkuliev opened by noting the "close collaboration" existing between the SCNS and the U.S. Embassy, and said the two sides have been meeting "two or three times a month," including with representatives of the Office of Military Cooperation/CENTCOM, the Defense Attache Office, and TDY DEA Agent Vladimir Trynkin (who was also present at the meeting). Muhammedkuliev expressed appreciation for the training programs and study tours that the Embassy has arranged for SCNS officers. When asked about the agency's history and

functions, Muhammedkuliev said the SCNS was created in January 2008 and is an independent "military law enforcement agency," acting and functioning within the framework of a special presidential decree and other laws. He said that SCNS staffing is incomplete; they are still in the process of hiring personnel. The agency also has a training center under construction where predominantly junior officers would be trained in operative skills and investigative techniques, however no training for chemists or lab experts was yet planned for the site.

15. (SBU) The ICITAP team asked whether SCNS has established its own forensics lab, to which Muhammedkuliev replied that they have purchased the main equipment needed for its establishment and also identified a building where it will be located. He declined to specify which equipment had been purchased for the lab, but assured that they had obtained "the most modern equipment available" at the advice of experts from the Criminal Research Center (CRC) of the Ministry of the Interior. The SCNS plans to have 10 to 12 chemists at its main lab in Ashgabat, as well as five or six at each of the provincial labs it plans to establish.

16. (SBU) In discussing the relationship between SCNS and the Ministry of Interior (MVD), which previously held responsibility for Turkmenistan's counternarcotics functions, the SCNS officials indicated they had "no problems" working with them and had a good working relationship. Colonel Yusupov emphasized, however, that

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according to current Turkmen legislation, the SCNS is the lead counternarcotics agency. He noted that drug-related crimes are set forth in articles 292-301 of the Criminal Code, and that all activities investigating trafficking, usage, purchase, distribution and sale of illegal narcotics are solely the purview of the SCNS, although they continue to rely on the CRC for drug testing and analysis. Once the SCNS lab becomes operational, drug analysis will be carried out there, but "this does not mean that the CRC lab will cease to exist." Its activities will be coordinated with the SCNS.

17. (SBU) COMMENT: The meeting started on a somewhat embarrassing note for the SCNS officers. As soon as the DEA Agent sat down, the back of his chair broke. Although the chair was quickly replaced, the meeting got off to a poor start. The SCNS officers were evasive when responding to many of the questions. END COMMENT.

MILES